

H. Lederberg

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March 20, 1980

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
President
The Rockefeller University
66 York Avenue
New York, NY

Dear Josh:

I just read in the New York Times that you are Chairman of the Cancer Advisory Committee and I thought you might be interested in the problem on which I am working.

I have been concerned for some time that we haven't any 'measuring stick' in regard to chemical mutagens. You remember, something similar was developed in regard to radiation as we first determined man's unavoidable exposure to ionizing radiation from cosmic rays, potassium in the body and necessary medical X-rays. This served as the basis by which effects were recognized at low dosages. You know this story, of course, very well.

Now, I am trying to do something of a similar nature with regard to chemicals. The National Cancer Institute has given me a small amount of money (which is handled by the Brookhaven National Laboratory) to develop this idea. We held two workshops in 1979 out of which came the attached list of chemicals to which man is unavoidably exposed. Of course, there are many additional chemicals, but these, we decided, are the most significant to serve as a preliminary guideline for future measurements. Based on a committee set up as the Task Force #4 of the International Commission for Protection against Environmental Mutagens and Carcinogens (ICPEMC), our organizing committee consists of Drs. Takashi Sugimura, Verne Ray, Lorenzo Tomatis and myself, as chairman.

accept: ☐

regret: ☒

phoned

in California

March 20, 1980

The third conference is scheduled for March 26 and 27 and the program for this is attached. Might you be able to attend to help us to develop this idea further? ✓

The first day, we will try to determine the validity of the data which has thusfar been collected on these four chemical groups and we will try to make a more definite statement of estimated exposure. On the second day, we will deal more with planning and where we should go from here to determine the genetic potency of these chemicals or possibly the utilization of another approach which may be more promising to look at chemicals from a somewhat different point of view. In any case, the 27th will deal entirely with planning and we will consider the unavoidable exposure to carcinogens and those which are produced in the body.

If you are able to join us, we would appreciate your background and feel that your participation would be most useful at this meeting. We will begin at 10:00 A.M. on Wednesday, March 26 and at 9:00 A.M. on Thursday at Building 31, C-Wing, Conference Room 8 at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda. ✓

Cordially,


Alexander Hollaender

AH/cmw
enclosures